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ABSTRACT

A study examined the adjustments made in an individual's speech according to the age and native language of the person being addressed, and compared the results to previous findings on characteristics of "foreigner talk" and "mother talk". An adult native English-speaker addressed four people in turn--an adult native English-speaker, an adult non-native English-speaker, a 3-year-old native speaker, and the child's mother--by giving them instructions on how to build a particular structure of colored toy blocks. The dialogues were recorded and analyzed for rate of speech, non-fluencies, reference, redundancy and paraphrases, and number of interaction elements. Additional aspects examined were the impact of rehearsal on the addressor, the implications of addressing each of the addresses, simplification strategies used with the child, spatial orientation, and other observations such as use of names, interjections, and confirming responses. It is concluded that variation in speech according to the addressee's linguistic competence and/or age probably does occur and that the results support the existence of reduced registers such as foreigner or mother talk, although fewer features of foreigner talk than mother talk were observed here. (MSE)

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IMPACT OF ADULTS AND CHILDREN ON THE ADDRESSOR

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IMPACT OF ADULTS AND CHILDREN ON THE ADDRESSOR *

1. ABSTRACT

Sociolinguistic studies have been tackling the issue of 'variation' in human speech for nearly three decades. These studies have focussed on variation in such contexts as social class (Bernstein) and social situations and attention to speech (Labov) on the one hand; and on phenomena of speech adjustment in terms of simplification on the other.

The latter, simplification, is manifest in pidgins, creoles, "foreigner talk" and "mother talk".

It is worthy of mention that foreigner talk is a register of speech used to address a non-native speaker of a language; whereas mother talk is register of speech used in talking to a child.

Nevertheless, both these two registers, i.e. foreigner talk and mother talk, accroding to Corder (1978), Ferguson (1976) and Snow 1977), share similar features of which the most salient are: reduced mean length of utterance (mlu); slower speech; reiteration of words or uttereances; absence of the copula; omission of articles or pronoun subjects; reduced lexical density; morphological markings and limited subordination.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate variation or adjustment in one's speech accroding to the addressee and see to what extent this does tally with the aforementioned characteristic features of foreigner talk and mother talk.

2. SUBJECTS

Four subjects have been required for this experiment: one adult native speaker of English to address three different people, one at a time, and give them each *verbal* instructions on how to build a particular structure out of colored toy blocks.

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* I am greatly indebted to Ellen Bard for the idea of this research.

These three addressees, whose linguistic capacity is different are:

a) another adult native speaker of English
b) an adult non-native speaker of English
c) a three-year old child for whom English is the sole mother tongue

In an endeavour to control the sex factor and its concomitants, if any, the four subjects chosen for this experiment are all female. Furthermore, they are all residents of the same university housing area.

Neither of the two adult native speakers is connected with the Department of Linguistics. Moreover, none of the subjects has had previous experience with this type of experiment.

Below is a smattering of each subject:

2.1 The Instructor (Addressor)

Miss Kathy Brennon (21) from Pennsylvania is a junior studying English and psychology. She is experienced, she says, in talking to younger children by virtue of having young cousins. She also has a brother who is three years younger than she is.

2.2 Non-Native Addressee

Miss Tanja Werner (23) is from W. Germany. She is a junior studying the "Advanced Certificate of English Studies". She has studied English for nine years at school and for two more years at the University. Moreover, she has passed a major proficiency test from whose score her level in English has been determined to be advanced.

2.3 The Native Addressee

Kasia Blinska Jundzill (21), whose father is originally Polish, is a native speaker of English. Her father started speaking English at the age of nine. Her family members communicate in English at home.

Kasia is a sophomore studying French and History of Arts. She has three

sisters and one brother, but she is the eldest in the family.

2.4 The child

Karen is a three-year-old child and the youngest daughter of Mr. Steward, who is a resident adviser in one of the university dormitories. She has an eight-year-old sister and a six-year-old brother. For Karen, English is the sole mother tongue. Karen's mother, Vicky, was with her during the experiment and spared no effort to help Karen follow the instructions.

3. PROCEDURE

3.1 Dialogue- Recording Atmosphere

The participants were notified in advance that the dialogues might and would be recorded in due course. A suggestion from the researcher was approved by all parties involved that the times of actual recording be made unknown to them in order to procure more natural dialogues. All the dialogues were recorded in one small study bedroom in the dormitory. A tape recorder was concealed under the bed and was attached, by a wire, to a tiny microphone which was by no means conspicuous due to its unnoticeable place and minute size.

Apart from Kathy, the instructor (addressor), none of the interlocutors was actually aware when the dialogues were being recorded.

It might have been better not to have let Kathy know about the actual time of recording either; but this was not feasible. She did stay in the room while the other participants arrived or left, one at a time. Thus, it would have been impractical to ignore the chances of Kathy's observing the process of switching the tape recorder on and off so often. The latter process had to be overt due to the inavailability of sophisticated equipment.

Nevertheless, Kathy got so preoccupied with the thought of helping her addressees with the correct instructions that she entirely forgot about the whole business of recording right from the outset. Since she was not aware of that, her speech flowed in a natural way.

In the room there were two chairs facing each other with a small table between them. There was a briefcase vertically put on the table to make it impossible for the addressee to see a glued model of the structure which

was always visible to the addressor. The briefcase served as a curtain to hide the model from the former and expose it to the latter.

Each addresse at a time had a set of colored toy blocks in front of her on the table and was supposed to listen to Kathy's verbal instructions and try to build a duplicate model.

It is noteworthy that prior to each session the new participant was told exactly what she was supposed to be doing and had her 'general instructon' read out to her by the investigator. In the case of the child who was too young to abide by all the instructions, her mother was given some general instructions instead (see Appendices).

As for the addressor, she had her instructions at the very beginning of the experiment. She came to know all the details of the experiment and of the people involved except the fact that the focal attention was *her speech* which would constitute the prime objective of the experiment. The fact that she knew about the hidden recorder whereas the others did not, made her totally rule out the significance of *her* speech.

3.2 The Order of the Participants

It was basically arranged that Kathy, the adult native speaker of Englsih, instruct *three* people, one at a time, but by virtue of having a fourth person, i.e. the child's mother, accessible and willing to co-operate, it was decided that the latter person be added to the list of the addressees as an additional adult native speaker for the purpose of studying the impact of rehearsal on the addressor's performance by comparing the two native addressees' responses.

The order of the addressor's instructing the addressees and consequently the investigator's recording of the dialogues consecutively was as follows:

1. Non-native speaker (Tanja)- Monday, Feb. 12th: 7:40p.m.
2. First Native speaker (Kasia)-Monday, Feb. 12th: 8:20p.m.
3. Second Native speaker (Vicky, Child's Mother)- Friday, Feb. 16th: 4.00p.m.
4. The Child (Karen)- Friday, Feb. 16th: 4:05p.m.

3.3 Time Required to Build the Structure

It took Tanja, the non-native speaker of English 2 minutes and 58 seconds

(approximately 3 minutes) to complete the structure.

Kasia, the first native speaker, spent 2 minutes and 28 seconds (approximately two and a half minutes) in building the structure; whereas it took the second native speaker (Vicky) no more than 2 minutes and 4 seconds to finish it.

The differnce of 24 seconds (which is 16% of the toal period, i.e., 2m. 28s.) between the two native speakers is accounted for elsewhere in this paper (see Data Analyses 5.3.1)

On the other hand, Karen, the child, spent 9 minutes and 15 seconds without being able even to complete half of the structure. This made it necessary to stop the tape and finish the procedure which was getting in the doldrums and driving the addressor to overt despair.

4. PRIOR TO DATA ANALYSES

Due to seeking high accuracy, at least eleven hours were spent in the language laboratory, in the painstaking process of transcribing a corresponding number of minutes of the recorded conversations.

To ensure some kind of uniformity in transcribing, and to check its accuracy further, one minute of randomly-selected text was transcribed by another fellow linguist. A third colleague was asked to go through the whole tape once more and check the accuracy of the transcriptions which are considered now to be highly accurate. Nothing is left out, even the faintest audible whisper. The pauses are represented by dots; each dot corresponds to one second. Thus the length of each pause can be inferred from the number of dots (see B.3). Each participant was consulted later to further the accuracy of the transcription.

The other precautionary measure was using two native speaker addressees instead of only one as originally planned to account for further investigation pertinent to the role of rehearsal.

Likewise some more calculations than originally planned have been done because they turned out to be germane to the analyses. Furthermore, percentages of occurrence of items have been measured whenever found appropriate.

5. DATA ANALYSES

5.1 Calculations and Tables

The followoing sets of calculations have been devised for the purpose of obtaining hard data to base the subsequent anlyses of the texts on.

5.1.1 Rate of Speech:

a) words per minute

b) */utterances per minute /*(I)

c */mean length of utterance* (mlu)/

(The *second* minute of the transcribed part of each conversation has been used and precisely timed).

5.1.2 Non-fluencies:

a) Total number of incomplete sentences

b) Total number of disfluencies: false starts, stutters, breaks of sentence in mid-stream

c) Number of interruptions and overlaps (Both speakers speaking at the same time)

d) /interjectory remarks (uhm, yeah, wow)/ (II)

5.1.3 Reference:

a) /Number of times *color* is used to refer to the blocks(the red block, the blue one)/

b) /Number of times pronouns or phrases are used to refer to the blocks to substitute for colors (the other one, the one you just put down)/

5.1.4 Redundancy- Rate of Information Transmission:

a) Number of verbatim repetitions:

i) of whole sentences (put the blue one on the yellow one; put the blue one on the yellow one)

ii) of parts of sentences (put the green one down, the green one)

iii) /of words (next, next)/

b) Number of paraphrases (of at least one constituent): (Put the blue one down; No, set the blue one on the table).

5.1.5 Interaction:

a)Number of commands/requests, statements and questions.
b)Number of instances of positive/negative feedback to listener's activities (that's great; no no leave them on the table).
c)Number of questions asked by the listener
d)/ Number of listener responses [III] to indicate her presence or to break the monotony of the addressor's monologue:(the second yes; okay; right; ...urm)/

5.2 Tables

TABLE 1

Addressor's Rate of Speech & MLU (mean length of utterance)

Addressee	*Total Words*	*Total Utterances*	*Utterances per minute*	*Words per minute*	*MLU*
NNS	289	37	22	168	7.8 ≈ 8
NS	307	28	25	263	10.9 ≈ 11
Ch	428	43	24	237	9.9 ≈ 10

NNS = Non-native speaker
NS = Native speaker
Ch = Child
≈ = approximately

TABLE 2

Non-Fluencies

Addressee	*Incomplete sentences*	*Inter- * ruptions*	*Over- laps*	*False starts*	*Stutters*	*Gap fillers*	*Break of** sentence*
NNS	nil	2	7	1	1	25	nil
NS	2	nil	3	3	2	16	1
Ch	6	nil	nil	2	5	25	4

* Interruptions are not the same as overlaps though they both indicate simultaneous speech. Clancy (1972) differentiates periods of simultaneous speech which lead to broken-off, unfinished sentences ("interruptions"), from those which involve the first speaker completing his utterance while the second speaker is beginning ("overlaps").

** That is break of sentence in mid-stream.

NB No overlaps occur in addressor's interlocution with child but they occur between the former and the investigator or the child's mother. They have been disregarded in the calculation.

TABLE 3
Reference

Addressee	*Total # of References*	*Lexical Words/ Colors*	*%*	*Pronouns & Phrases*	*%*
NNS	40	35	87.5	5	12.5
NS	38	35	92	3	8
Ch	46	29	63	17	37

TABLE 4
Redundancy

Addressee	*Repetition of Words*	*Repetition of sentences*		
		Verbatim	*Partial*	*Paraphrase*
NNS	1	2	1	2
NS	1	1	1	1
Ch	13	4	9	5

TABLE 5a

Interaction

Addressee	*Commands*	*Statements*	*Questions*	*Positive feedback*	*Negative feedback*
NNS	15	5	nil	11	3
NS	12	12	nil	5	2
Ch	16*	8	15	19	10

* The number of commands to the child can be increased from 16 to 18 since both utterances #6 and #17 have the illocutionary force of a command, though they, unlike the rest of the plain commands, are not imperatives.

#6 : if you put the yellow one on the table
#7 : could you push those ones over to the other side?

TABLE 5b

Interaction
(Questions & Responses from Listeners to Instructor)

Speaker	*Questions*	*Responses* *
NNS	8	7
NS	10	6
Ch	nil	? **

* Listener Responses (Dittmann & Llewellyn:1967) go under several terms: Yngve 1970 calls them 'back channel behaviours' whereas Kendon (1967) names them 'accompaniment signals.'

** Since only the last five minutes of the conversation with the child has been transcribed, no traces of 'listener responses' are manifest on the part of the child here. Yet there are obvious evidences of these responses in the first half of the conversation (Excerpts of the first half have been transcribed for this purpose).

TABLE 6

Degree of Complexity in Syntax
(Kinds of sentences used by addressor) *

Addressee	*Total Sentences*	*Simple*	*%*	*Compound*	*%*	*Complex*	*%*	*Compound-Complex*	*%*
NN	29	28	96.5	nil	-	1	3.5	-	-
NS	21	10	47.6	6	28.5	4	19	1	4.7
Ch	45	39	86.6	5	11	1**	2	-	-

*No cleft sentences have been regarded in this calculation.
**This complex sentence, despite its appearance in the coversation with Karen, is not in fact addressed to the child. It occurs within one of the many 'asides.' If we exclude this sentence from the total, the percentage of the simple sentences addressed to the child will go further up to 88.6%.

5.3 Discussion of Results

5.3.1 The Impact of Rehearsal on the Addressor:

The interlocution between the addressor and the native-speaker addressee has been regarded as the norm. This is the non-simplified rhetoric on whose grounds all the evidence of deviating from the norm (in addressing either the NNS or the child) and ad hoc comparisons have been based.

It is noteworthy that all the subtle differences between the norm on the one hand and the two registers, i.e., foreigner talk and mother talk, on the other, should not always be accounted for in terms of pure simplification strategies. The other likely factor to which several differences as such may plausibly be ascribed is rehearsal on the part of the addressor.

As stated earlier, the addressor instructed two native speakers **(IV)** one at a time. It took the first NS 2 minutes, 28 seconds to complete the structure, where as it took the second NS no more than 2 minutes and 4 seconds to complete. The difference is 24 seconds which constitutes 16% of the total time spent by the first NS.

Each time the addressor starts giving her instructions anew, they are clearer and she herself is more at ease. For instance, she didn't explain that the holes in the colored blocks were of no importance until the NNS raised the question:

> Tanja: Is it special if the hole is here?
> Kathy: /[5]no no it doesn't matter/ (see C.2)

In the next session, with the NS, she mentioned it even without being asked:

> Kathy: /[8]OK on top of those two blue ones tu-put two . . red ones and the holes don't matter/ (see C.2)

Another example is Kathy's thinking that the structure was completed by the NNS. She resorts to a long pause then realizes all of a sudden that there is much more to do and resumes instructing the addressee to continue building the structure. This incident occurs once and in the first session only, whereas it does not take place in the subsequent sessions.

Kathy: /[26](whisper) you're doing fine that's it(13 second pause)
/ [27] Oh on top of the .. blue one put a green one/

Uncertainty gradually diminishes thanks to rehearsing. Hesitancy, symbolized by gap fillers, decreases too. To quote N. Ferguson, (1976:13) "There appears to be a certain amount of agreement that the presence of filled pauses in speech indicates hesitancy, and that this hesitancy is connected, in some way, with the cognitive and linguistic planning of utterances (see, for instance, Maclay and Osgood (1959), Boomer 1965), Cook (1971) and Quinting (1971)"

Table 2 of Non-fluencies, shows 25 gap fillers for the NNS versus only 16 (in the next session) for the NS.(V)

Kathy uses the word 'ground' to refer to the table with three different addressees: the NNS, the second NS and the child. She is so wary at the outset - when addressing the NNS - that she corrects that word despite its obvious intelligibility while she does not correct it with the other two interlocutors:

/[19] ur on the ground. I mean on the table/ (see C.1)

Having given the inaccurate instruction once, Kathy apologizes and corrects herself. This occurs in the first sesssion while addressing the NNS, whereas it does not occur in any of the subsequent sessions.

/[32] uhm...and ..... oh sorry .. (!) yellow blue and yellow one .. urm/

The impact of reheasal should not be ignored when analysing the results or comparing the three dialogues in terms of redundancy, rate of speech, non-fluencies, etc.

It should likewise be borne in mind that the process of addressing the NNS preceded the rest and consequently the concomitants of the lack of rehearsal in the addressor's language are evident.

5.3.2 Implications of Addressing the NNS:

Prior to setting out in quest of any traces of 'foreigner talk' in the addressor's interlocution with the NNS addressee, it has to be admitted that the latter term does not apply to Tanja whose English is remarkabley good.

Kathy, the addressor, thus needn't resort to this register quite often. 'Foreigner talk', to quote C. Ferguson (1971), "is used by speakers of a language to outsiders who are felt to have a very limited command of the language or no knowledge of it at all. Many (all?) languages seem to have particular features of pronunciation, grammar and lexicon which are characteristically used in this situation."

Had Tanja's English been less remarkably good, it would have been quite feasible to highlight much more evidence of this simplified register, i.e., foreigner talk.

Nevertheless, simplification in rhetoric is too conspicuous to disregard. The language adopted by the addressor in interlocuting with the NNS, compared to that used in addressing the NS, i.e., the norm, has many characteristic features of simplification such as: lower rate of speech, less intricate syntax, more repetitions, etc.

As for the rate of speech, Table 1 is self-explanatory. The mean length of utterance (mlu) is approximately 8 for the NNS versus 11 for the native speaker. On the other hand, the speaker talks at the rate of 168 words (and 22 utterances) per minute to the NNS but this rate goes up to 263 words (and 25 utterances) per minute while addressing the NS.

In addition to the shorter utterances and slower speech adopted by the speaker in addressing the NNS, a longer period of time, i.e. approximately 3 minutes, is required to give her the instructions that resulted in completing the structure. It took the NS only 2 minutes 28 seconds.

As far as repetition is concerned, Table 4 clearly shows that the dialogue with the NNS exceeds its counterpart with the NS by 50% in both the number of verbatim repetition of whole sentences and the number of paraphrases. This statistical analysis, however, may well be prone to unreliability due to the low frequency of occurrence, i.e., 2 instances versus 1 for the NS.

As an endeavor on the part of the addressor to be clear and unambiguous in her instruction, be it conscious or not, she avoids *incomplete sentences* as well as ***breaks of sentences in mid-stream*** . Neither of these occurs when she addresses the NNS, whereas each one occurs twice in the case of addressing the NS (see Table 2).

As for *interaction* , the addressor provides the NNS addressee with more

feedback. 11 positive and 3 negative instances of feedback versus 5 and 9 respectively for the NS. The provision of feedback can be looked upon as a *simplification strategy* . (see Table 5a).

On the other hand, in interacting with the addressor, the NNS asks her 8 questions and responds to her 7 times. These questions and responses are either to request clarification or are strategies for establishing some kind of *interaction* . Some of those 7 'listener responses' are merely parroting the addressor's utterances. (see Table 5b).

Listener's supportive comments- or 'accompaniment signals' as Kendon (1967) calls them- are sporadically breaking into what sometimes begins to appear as a monologue on the part of the addressor who holds the floor for relatively lengthy periods of time.

An obvious simplification strategy is the high percentage of using simple sentences (96.6%) in addressing the NNS whereas this percentage is no more than 47.6% in the case of the NS. The addressor seems to refrain from using the same amount of compound and complex sentences as she does with the NS, i.e. 52.4%. (for further details see Table 6).

No evidence of *absence of copula* or *omission of article* which are features of 'reduced registers' can be traced here but it might be noteworthy that there is only <u>one</u> example of *pronoun-subject omission* in the 34th utterance:

/33 right ..... /34 should be.. closer to you /

5.3.3 <u>Implications of Addressing the Child:</u>

Only the second half of the conversation with the child has been transcribed, (see C. 3). In addition to the addressor, Kathy, and the child, Karen, two other people, i.e. the child's mother, Vicky, and the investigator himself, A.F., took part in the conversation.

If we exclude the utterances of the child's mother and those of the investigator's, the residue may well be called a monologue. The child does by no means comply with the addressor's 43 utterances. Even her only one single utterance that precedes Kathy's third utterance, is in fact addressed to Vicky, her mother.

Karen (to her mother): you show me how to do it

Vicky: no you show me
Kathy (laughing) /3 put..put a yellow one down and put the blue one on top of it/

Consequently and by virtue of the one-sidedness of the flow of information (instructions) and the addressor's often lengthy turns, we may classify the interlocution with the child as a monologue.

Even during the first half of the conversation when Karen responds more, her utterances are of a digressive nature and indicate among other things that she has not been following the instructions, and that she does *not* know the colors.

The following are transcriptions of excerpts from the first half of the conversation:

Kathy: /now put it next to that one/
Karen: tha (t) one right, the bra.. tha(t) one was the brown.. I have got a brown brown jumper
Kathy: /do you?/ wow / (aside) that's not brown that's green/

Elsewhere Karen's uttterances evidently indicate that she is not interested in building the structure at all. She wants her mother to take over. Neither compliment nor encouragement on the part of the three adult people helped the child to gain any interest. She found the whole process boring:

Kathy: /put it towards me/
Vicky (to Karen): come on
AF: you are doing very well
Kathy: /you are doing really well/
Karen (whisper): mummy.. it's your turn (all laugh)
Vicky: no (laugh) it's still your turn.. you haven't finished yet. come on

Kathy, who has been very enthusiastic right from the beginning, inundating the child with complimentary remarks and having no long pauses in the influx of her utterances, is getting desparate now. She realizes that the child is not following the instructions and that she will not be able to complete the structure which she herself still thinks is the prime objective of the experiment!

Signs of the addressor's despair do prevail over the last few minutes of her monologue. Fairly long pauses, much more gap fillers (25), six incomplete sentences, and five stutters, all indicate this state of hesitancy and despair. (for further details of non-fluencies, see Table 3).

Kathy: /25OK ..... um .....Ok ... um .. (aside) I can't even think of what to tell her to do/

The interesting phenomenon about the many asides that Kathy every now and then resorts to is that not only do they reveal despair but also a sort of irony. Kathy is less absorbed in giving the instructions and more aware of the other people's presence. That is why each time a word of praise or a compliment is said to the child now, an immediate aside follows to mitigate that. When later asked, Kathy admitted that she could not stand being hypocritical. Examples of these:

/16 it's almost right but not quite/
/18 yeah that's it yer that's great/ 19 (aside) almost great/
/39 no (laugh) that's really pretty (laugh) but it's not what we want/

The tape ran for 9 minutes and 15 seconds. The child was entirely tired and bored. The structure was far from being completed and the addressor imagined that all her efforts were to no avail. Just before the tape was turned off and the experiment concluded, the addressor revealed another symptom of uncertainty in her last utterance:

/43 I'm not getting anywhere (laugh) am I?/

5.3.4 Simplification strategies towards the child:

The addressor adopts many simplification strategies in addressing the child. She is quite consistent in most of them whereas the few other residues occur only sporadically.

The following is a summary of those simplification strategies:

1. *Lexical simplification and avoiding the use of colors* : For the first time lexical items such as "push, push together or take off" appear in the addressor's language to convey the instructions in a less perplexing way to

the child.

The word 'towards' which the addressor uses so often in addressing the NS and the NNS is not used even once with the child. It is always replaced by phrases like 'next to me', 'closest to you' or 'on the other side.'

Furthermore, when the addressor realizes that the child does not distinguish between the colors, she spares no effort to substitute them by explanatory phrases which seem to be more intelligible to the child, e.g. 'the one you just put down,' 'the one beside your leg,' 'beside mummy's leg.'

Table 4 shows that pronouns and phrases that substitue for colors in addressing the child are of a fairly high percentage, i.e. 37% **(VI)**

2. *Reduced register* : the speaker consistently uses a kind of reduced 'telegraphic' language, i.e., *telegraphese* to address the child, especially when asking her checking questions:

/see green?/
/see blue one?/
/see blue?/

No pronoun subject, no auxiliary and no article can be found in these utterances. This kind of simplifaication is never adopted in addressing the adult addressees. This reduced register may be called 'motherese' (Corder, lecture notes) since a mother talks to her child in this manner.

This register resembles 'telegraphese,' since English has, among other forms of simplified speech, special usages for telegrams and formal instructions which "resemble baby talk and foreigner talk in omitting article, preposition and copula and the resemblance of these usages to early childhood language behaviour has been noticed" (Brown and Bellugi, 1964:138-9).

Syntax-wise, Table 6 shows that out of 45 full sentences used in addressing the child, 39 are simple sentences. This forms a percentage of 86.6%. Moreover, if we exclude the only one complex sentence found in the addressor's talk to the child (simply because it occurs in one of the asides and is not addressed to the child), this percentage will rise to 88.6%.

If we compare these figures to their counterparts in the dialogue with the NS, the simple sentences do not exceed 47.6% and the rest are compound,

complex or compound- complex.

3. *Repetitions* : In addressing the child, the addressor reiterates much more than she does with the NS. According to Table 4, she repeats 13 words, 4 verbatim sentences, 9 partial sentences and 5 paraphrases. In addressing the NS (which is the norm) she repeats none of these items more than once. The gap is quite wide between the two lists of figures.

The high rate of repetitions may flimsily account for the unexpected similarity between the *mlu* of the child and the NS. (see Table 1).

4. *Feedback* : Apart from asking the child 15 times (versus nil for the NS) to check her understanding, the addressor continually provides her with feedback both negative and interrogative. 19 out of 29 feedbacks are positive whereas the rest, 10, are negative. The NS does not seem to be in need of so much feedback; she is provided with only seven (5 positive and 2 negative). (see Table 5a).

In addition to so much positive feedback, the addressor is very complimentary and uses many remarks. Below are some examples:

> that's very good
> good good
> you're doing really well
> great

5. *Using the 'imperative'* : Throughout all her dialogues, Kathy has consistently been using the 'imperative' to express commands or requests. Only twice does she deviate from that. She uses a conditional clause and a question-type request, in her interlocution with the child. They both have the 'illocutionary force' of a command or request.

> / 6 if you put the yellow one on the table.. that's it/
> /17 um.. could you push those those ones over to the other side?
> push those two together.

5.3.5 Futher Findings:

It is evident that the addressor calls the addressee by name for the first time when she addresses the child. She mentions the child's name five times throughout the conversation and three times throughout the

transcribed section of it (see C). It is worthy of mention that Kathy never does that in addressing either the NNS or the two NS's.

It is also found that Kathy never uses 'yes' in response to the addressees' questions. She almost always uses 'right' and very occasionally 'yeah.'

Most of the 'right's' therefore stand on thier own as independent utterances and not as interjections. To quote N. Ferguson (1976): "While interjections are usually one or two words long, remarks of this length are not always interjections. For instance, *yes* and *no* can constitute utterances when they are in reply to questions. In this case, they carry considerably greater semantic weight than interjections..."

Tanja: towards you.. er
Kathy: /[13] right/ (see C.1)

* * *

Kasia: on top?
Kathy: /[18] right/ (see C.2)

One more finding pertains to the word "block". This word has never been used by any interlocutor at any time throughout the several dialogues except *once* . Kasia, the first NS, uses this word at the very beginning of her dialogue with the addressor.

Kasia: OK.. urm.. well how many 'blocks' on the bottom?
Kathy: /[1]OK..ubr there've I think there have to be ten

Kathy never uses this word. She always uses 'one' instead (e.g. the red one). She uses 'one' 32 times out of 35 to refer to 'block' when she talks to Kasia for instance.

5.3.6 Spatial Orientation:

Spatial orientation is of significance throughout the experiment since the expressions: 'towards,' behind,' 'one the right' or 'on the left,' which are often used by the addressor may be dubious. They may have ambivalent interpretations according to the speaker or listener.

In order not to misinterpret or misconstrue the instructions conveyed through such expressions, the addressees, particularly the NS and NNS occasionally ask the addressor questions that pertain to spatial orientation. Their questions ensue whenever ambiguity seems to be prevailing.

Tanja, the NNS follows Kathy's 12th utterance with this remark:

Tanja: towards you..er (see C.1)

Kasia, the NS is even more subtle in her questions:

Kathy: / [5] next to them put a .. two blue ones..../
Kasia: next where?
Kathy: / [6] next to you therm .. ur .. on/ (see C.2)

Elsewhere in the same dialogue, the following exchange takes place:
Kathy: /[23]and OK next to that yellow one towards the right put a red one/
Kasia: your right or ... ?
Kathy: /[24]um .. my right ...../

Apart from these and some other few cases, Kathy is usually very clear in her instructions and tries to avoid ambiguity by defining the location precisely. She uses expressions like:

/ [8] behind the blue one closest to me/
/[14] behind that one towards me /
/[33] closer to you on the side of the cubes closest to you/ (see C.1)
/[22] in front of them towards you / (see C.2)

As for the child, the addressor adopts a different strategy. In an attempt towards simplification, she refrains from using the lexical items which she thinks are too difficult for the child to understand. (see lexical simplification 5.3.4).

Kathy tackles spatial orientation in an entirely different way now. She uses different 'adjectival phrases' like:

Kathy: /[29] right near closest to your leg/

* * *

Kathy: /[30] uhm .. OK see the one see that those two yellow ones right near mummy's leg right there ... those two/

(see C.3)

6. CONCLUSION

The addressor's dialogue with the native speaker addressee has been regarded as the norm on the basis of which all the inferences here are made. Based on that, it may be concluded now that variation in one's speech according to the addressee and to the latter's linguistic competence and/or probably age does occur.

This is not a phenomenon of English alone but of all languages. All languages, according to Corder (1978) "have ,it is believed, what have been called 'simplified' or 'reduced registers' which are used by native speakers for certain normally well-defined communicative tasks or types of discourse ."

This experiment supports the authenticity of the existence of such reduced registers as 'mother talk' and 'foreigner talk' by virtue of providing evidence that pertains to the characteristic features of these two registers.

The experiment provides comparatively fewer features of 'foreigner talk' than those abundant ones of 'mother talk,' because the non-native addressee has a remarkably good command of English.

Corder defines 'foreigner talk' as: "the register we use when we want to imitate or represent in a general way how undifferentiated foreigners speak our language" (Corder, 1978).

Nevertheless many characteristics of this register are manifest in the addressor's interlocution with the NNS.

7. FOOTNOTES

I. Items between slashes indicate that they are ad hoc calculations that had not originally been planned.

II. This term is used by Nicola Ferguson (1976)

III. The term *listener responses* has been used by Dittmann and Liewellyn (1967).

IV. The dialogue with the second NS has not been transcribed as it does not differ rhetoric-wise from that of the first NS.

V. In the case of the child the high number of gap fillers (25) cannot be ascribed to rehearsal. It is actually effected by the child's ill response to verbal instructions.

VI. It should be noted that the few cases, where colors are substituted for when addressing the NS or the NNS, are of anaphoric nature all. Obviously the two adult addressees know the colors too well to have difficulty in distinguishing them. (see Table 4)

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APPENDICES

A. GENERAL INSRUCTIONS TO ADDRESSOR AND TO ADDRESSEES

A.1 Instructions to the Addressor

(Addressor has been told to arrive a little earlier than the addressees to have her instructions and get prepared before they arrive.).

"You will be telling three different people, one at a time, how to build a structure similar to this glued model, out of these colored blocks. You will have this model visible to you while you are giving the instructions but the listener should not be able to see it at any time.

Each listener will sit opposite you at this table and will try to build the structure, aided by nothing but your instructions, which have to be verbal.

The listener will be able to ask you questions. You can answer them and make as many helpful remarks as you like provided that they are verbal.

Please DO NOT point, do not use any hand gestures at all, and do not let the listener see the structure you have in front of you.

Continue to give your instructions to each listener until the structure is completed or until I signal to you to stop."

A.2 Instructions to both adult addressees (NNS & NS)

"Kathy is going to tell you how to build a particular structure out of these blocks. She has the actual structure there behind that briefcase on the table but you should not be able to see it at any time. You can ask as many questions as you like and you will have plenty of time to do that but please remember that only VERBAL instructions are allowed."

A.3 Instructions to the child's mother

"Kathy is going to tell Karen how to build a particular structure out of these blocks. Kathy has the model there behind that box but Karen will not be able to see it at any time. She will only have the instructions that Kathy gives her verbally.

Karen can ask as many questions as she likes. You can help by sitting Karen on your lap and trying to keep her attention from wandering but please do NOT repeat the instructions to her, do not give any VERBAL help at all as far as building the structure is concerned. Just try to focus her attention on the job-- talking to her in that respect does not matter at all.

If any blocks drop off the table, would you just pick them up and carry on. Would you like to tell Karen now what we are going to do?"

B. DEFINITION OF TERMS

B.1 Utterances:

Since *spoken* language is tackled in this investigation, the conversations are transcribed on the basis of utterances. The term 'utterance,' to quote Fries, refers to "those chunks of talk that are marked off by a shift of speaker." (Fries, 1952; 23)

An 'utterance' may either be:

1. any full sentence; or
2. any sentence fragment or sentence under sentence intonation.

Repetitions belong within a single utterance, (e.g. Now you get, now you get that one.)

Real changes of mind are problematic. (Now you get ... there is one over there). One will have to resort to intonation (strong or sequential) to decide these utterances.

Anyway, *utterances* can be summarized to have the following features:

1. Anything that is syntactically or intonationally a complete sentence is an utterance.
2. An utterance may include one or more distinct utterances, i.e. it may be found on either side of one or more utterances.
3. An utterance may be an incomplete sentence, in which case it would be either an abandoned or an interrupted utterance.
4. An utterance may include repetitions of words, phrases, and/or clauses.

B.2 Words

The following considerations are pertinent to the calculation of words:

1. Anything that is a complete word is regarded as a word.
2. Repetitions of the same word are counted each time
3. Contractions are counted as if spelt out
4. If a part of a word is uttered, it is not counted as a word:
   (to-towards = 1 word)
5. Normal pause or gap fillers (e.g. urm, aha, yeah) are not counted as words unless they have a semantic significance in which case the gap filler is counted as a word. Example: Aha = I understand.

B.3 General Procedure for Transcription

1. Utterance boundaries are demarcated by slanted strokes / /. Thus the same slanted stroke marks both the end of an utterance and the beginning of the next one, e.g.

   /[17] Right that's fine /[18] urm .. OK ... next to the .. orange one with the yellow one on top of it put a green one/[19].... no ur on the ground I mean on the table / (C .1)

2. Pauses are represented by dots. The number of dots corresponds to the length of utterance. Thus the more the dots the longer the utterance (each dot indicates, roughly, a pause of one second.)
3. Incomprehensible utterances chiefly due to inaudibility are symbolized by an exclamation mark between two square brackets: [!]
4. Explanatory remarks are inserted between round brackets ()

   /[19] (aside) well almost great /[20] urm .. the (laugh) that's that's pretty good um ..... mmm ..... / (C.3)

5. Commas, periods or other punctuation marks, apart from question marks, do NOT appear in the transcription.
6. Whenever there is simultaneous speech, be it an interruption or an overlap, that chunk of speech on the part of either interlocutors is underlined and placed one under the other to show the exact amount of simultaneity.

Kathy: that blue one closest to me the second
Tanja: which one ?
Kathy: the second
Tanja: the second one
Kathy: Right (C.1)

C. TRANSCRIPTS

C.1 Addressing the Non-native speaker (NNS).

Addressor : Kathy

Addressee : Tanja (NNS)

Kathy: /[1]OK. Take a..an orange one and a green one the green one towards me and the orange one towards you.. /[2]OK and next to it put two blue ones...../

Tanja: this one right?

Kathy: /[3]right that's fine/an[4] a..on top

Tanja: is it special if the hole is here?

Kathy: /[5]no no it doesn't matter/

Tanja: OK ... OK

Kathy: /[6]urm on top of the blue ones put two red ones..... /[7]OK..um..behind the blue one closest to me put an orange one..../[8]er the other side of it/[9]that's it/ [10]..behind that one put a red one.../[11]no behind to-towards me/

Tanja: towards you .. er

Kathy: /[12]right../[13]and behind that one towards me put a blue one...../[14]OK now on top of the red one put a blue one/

Tanja: this one?

Kathy: /[15]urh yeah/[16]on top of the .. orange one put the yellow one/

Tanja: this?

Kathy: /[17]right that's fine/[18]urm.. OK...next to the.. orange one with the yellow one on top of it put a green one..../[19]no ur on the ground. I mean on the table/ (laugh)

Tanja: yeah yeah yeah

Kathy: /[20]yeah .. um OK .. um on top of that yellow one put a green one..../[21]OK .. um ... right ..... on top of the green one..put a red one.../[22]no I mean on top of the green one [!]

Tanja: the small one

Kathy: /[23]urm.. OK .. and next to that green .. and red column you just made

Tanja: urm

Kathy: /[24]urm .. put a yellow a blue and a yellow /

Tanja: a yellow blue and a yellow yeah

Kathy: /[25]OK. and .... at the end of that one .... put a .. a red ... /[26](whisper) you're doing fine that's it ..... (13 second pause) /[27]Oh on top of the .. blue one put a green one /[28]that blue one closest to me the second

Tanja: which one?

Kathy: /[29]the second /

Tanja: the second one

Kathy: /[30] right/[31] and on top of that put an orange one /

Tanja: yes

Kathy: /[32] uhm ... and ..... oh sorry .. [!] yellow blue and yellow one .. urm /

Tanja: yellow blue yellow this <u>one</u>

Kathy: /[33] <u>right</u> / [34] should be .. closer to you on the other side of the cubes closest to you.../ [35] that's it .. <u>and</u>

Tanja: <u>and</u> the red one next the yellow?

Kathy: /[36] right ..... /[37] that should be .... that should be it ..... (14 second pause) yeah that's it .. OK /

C.2 <u>Addressing the Native Speaker (NS)</u>

Addressor : Kathy

Addressee : Kasia

Kasia: OK .. urm .. well how many blocks on the bottom?

Kathy: /[1] OK .. urb there're I think there have to be ten but I can a I'll tell you which one .. to put. I'll just tell you where to put them .. so then you just can follow the instructions /[2] take an orange one and a green one and put them together / [3] OK that's it / [4] the green one towards me and the orange one towards you .. /[5] OK next to them put a-two blue ones .... /

Kasia: next where?

Kathy: /[6]next to you therm .. ur .. on

Kasia: like this?

Kathy: /[7]right .. /[8]OK on top of those two blue ones tu-put two .. red ones and the holes don't matter /

Kasia: OK

Kathy: /[9]OK .. now, OK next to the blue one towards me put an orange one .... OK /[10]um .. no on on the other side /

Kasia: on the other side

Kathy: /[11]and OK behind that one towards me put a red one and then a blue one /

Kasia: like this?

Kathy: /[12]right .. that's it/[13]um .. OK on top of the red one put .. the red one that you just put down .. put a blue one a green one and an orange one /

Kasia: (whispering) a blue one, green one, orange one

Kathy: /[14]OK and on the top of the orange one towards you .. in the middle put um a yellow one and a green one /

Kasia: What? this one?

Kathy: /[15]no the other one /

Kasia: this one?

Kathy: /[16]yeah that's it /

Kasia: that's an orange one ... a yellow one and a green

Kathy: /[17]um. .a yellow one and a green /

Kasia: on top?

Kathy: /[18]right ..... /[19]OK now next to that orange one .. put a green one and on top of that a red one/[20]..... next to the orange one and

Kasia: a green one and a red one on top?

Kathy: /[21][!] um ..... a green one and then a red one on top ../ [22]um ..... OK in front of them towards you put a yellow one a blue one and a yellow ..... on top of each other /

Kasia: OK

Kathy: /[23]and OK next to that yellow one towards the right put a red one /

Kasia: your right or ... ?

Kathy: /[24]um .. my right ..... /[25]urm .. (whispering) that should be it ... /[26]put the yellow [!] I don't know if you put the yellow one on top of the blue one straight /

Kasia: what?

Kathy: /[27]it's just s-straight /

Kasia: I see

Kathy: /[28]OK that should be right .. I think OK /

C.3 Addressing the child *

Addressor : Kathy

Addressee : Karen (3 year old child)

Child's mother : Vicky **

Investigator: A.F.

Kathy: /[1]now take a green <u>one</u> /[2]see green one? see green? /

Vicky: <u>listen</u>

Karen: (whispering to her mother) : you show me how to do it

Vicky: no you show me

Kathy: (laughing) /[3]put .. put a yellow one down and put the blue on top of it .. /[4]right) on the table just put on the table that's it /[5]the yellow one and then put a blue one ... /[6]now .. close but put that if you put the yellow one on the table .. that's it ... /[7]now good .. the two .. yeah .. that's it .. /[8]put the blue one on top of it (Karen coughing) /[9]no blue one .. see blue one? /[10]that's it/ [11]yeah that's right /[12]now put it . no no put it on top of the yellow one /[13]see the yellow one there? .. near near mum's leg right there? /[14] the yellow one ... no the one on the table /[15]it's close you get there no no almost wait over urm .. (laugh) /[16]it's it's almost right but no(t) quite /[17]um .. could you push those those ones over to the other side?

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* In this transcript only the last five minutes of the approximately ten-minute conversation with the child appears.

** The child's mother, Vicky, as well as the investigator intervene every now and then to encourage the child to carry on. This is manifest in the transcription.

push those two together /[18]yer that's it yeah that's great /[19](aside) well almost great /[20]urm .. the (laugh) that's that's pretty good um ..... mm ..... um ... (inaudible whisper)

A.F. listen to what Kathy's saying

Vicky: listen we've not finished yet 'cause [!] (Kathy laughing) there's more to do

A.F. almost finished

Vicky: wait wait till she tells you which one ....

Kathy: (laughing) .. /[21]ur .... OK push this Karen

Vicky: listen Karen listen listen

Kathy: /[22]you are doing very well you're .. /[23]you almost have it finished

Vicky: you haven't finished

Kathy: /[24]seethis see the .. the ... the yellow an(d) urn an(d) the orange an and the green ones next to me ... Karen? /

Vicky: listen listen listen

A.F. you have only two left ... and it'll be finished

Vicky: two to do come on ... two now listen

Kathy: /[25]OK ..... um ..... OK ... um .. (aside) I can't even think of what to tell her to do /[26]right put a .. a take a red one .. /[27]you see red one? .... /[28]no

not that one /[29]see the one closest to you right there? ../[30]no one it's it's like right near closest to your leg ..... (cough).../[31]that's good .. OK .. that's good (cough) .. um .....

Vicky: s-wait a minute one there's only one or two more to do

Kathy: /[32]uhm .. OK see the one see that those two yellow ones right near mummy's leg right there ... those two /[33]that's it .. yeah right /[34]OK take the blue one .. see the blue one right over on the other side? ... /[35]no no leave them on the ground there and take the blue one ..... /[36]very good .. that's it yat and put the yeah that's right that's right put the blue one on the yellow one / [37]no the one you just put down see the one you just put down ? .. / [38]that's it yeah that's right .. no no put the blue one on top of the yellow one /[39]no (laugh) that's really pretty (laugh) but it's not what we want (cough) .. um

Vicky: (whisper): come on you've nearly finished listen

Kathy: /[40]OK take take the red one off the top there .. Karen /

Vicky: listen listen

Kathy: /[41]see that one on the top? take it off ... take take the one off the top .. that's it [!] [42]um t-put the .. see the yellow one right there on the other side .... put yeah just put the put the blue one on top of that .....

Vicky: (whisper) come on where is it? We're almost finished

Kathy: (cough) ... (laugh) /[43]I'm not getting anywhere (laugh) am I?